

# IS THIS WHERE YOUR TEEN GOES TO GET HIGH?



A growing danger among teens today is the intentional abuse of prescription drugs and over-the-counter cough and cold medicines to get high.

One cause of the problem is how easily teens can find them. These drugs are most likely already in your own home. Over half of teens who abuse prescription painkillers report they get them for free from the homes of family or friends, or they take them from family or friends without asking.<sup>1</sup>

Most frightening, however, is that teens often don't recognize the dangers of prescription and over-the-counter drug abuse; they don't see it to be as harmful as illicit drug use. After all, these drugs are approved for medical use. But when taken without medical supervision, intentionally abused, or mixed with other drugs or alcohol, prescription medicines can be dangerous. Teens who decide to abuse prescription drugs run the risk of addiction, strokes, seizures, comas, and even death.

Unfortunately, it's a growing trend. Teens are turning away from using street drugs to prescription medications to get high. New users of prescription drugs are actually catching up with new users of marijuana.<sup>2</sup>

The first step for parents is to recognize the potential risks and consequences of prescription drug abuse, and to help teens understand them as well. Learn the signs, symptoms, and tips on how to talk to your teens about prescription drug abuse. **Educate yourself to protect your teens; visit [www.TheAntiDrug.com](http://www.TheAntiDrug.com) or call 1-800-788-2800.**

Overall, teen use of street drugs is down. That's great; that means you've been doing your job. Now it's time to make sure that you stay updated on this latest threat to your teens' health and safety.

Signed,

American Academy of Pediatrics  
American College of Emergency Physicians  
American Medical Association  
American Pharmacists Association  
American Society of Addiction Medicine  
Association for Medical Education  
and Research in Substance Abuse (AMERSA)

National Association of Chain Drug Stores  
National Association of School Nurses  
National Council on Patient Information and Education  
Partnership for a Drug-Free America  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
National Institute on Drug Abuse  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
U.S. Food and Drug Administration

**PARENTS.**  
THE ANTI-DRUG.

[www.TheAntiDrug.com](http://www.TheAntiDrug.com)

<sup>1</sup> SAMHSA, Office of Applied Studies, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2005  
<sup>2</sup> Ibid